THE BUMBLE BEE

Vol. 1, No. 10

AUGUST, 1945

Columbia River Packers Association

Astoria, Oregon

EDITORIAL

Alaska Interests

CRPA has just completed its Alaska fishing venture for 1945, and, under the circumstances created by war conditions, enjoyed a fair measure of success. With the world war ended CRPA hopes that normal operation procedures will be followed in 1946 and looks toward further development of its Alaska interests.

The particular factor upon which we wish to comment at this time is the desire of this company to identify itself more closely with the people of the territory in which it operates. This desire has been expressed during the past few years by a policy of increased employment of Alaskan residents in its operations in that territory. During the past year of the 450 persons employed in Alaska by this company 80% were bona fide territorial residents.

Until such time as Alaska's population increases to a point that labor with the required technical knowledges and skills for a complex cannery operation can be obtained there, the necessity for the annual importation of some workers will continue. However, CRPA will continue to use resident labor to the fullest extent possible with practical operational practice. Operating in the territory it feels that it is an integral part of that community. It desires to make itself part of the Alaska community picture and to do its part in the permanent development of this community and the betterment of all conditions affecting its people.

Fish Versus Dams

(Continued)

(In the previous issue of the *Bumble Bee* we discussed the potential value of the Columbia River Fishery, the certainty of its ultimate extinction by the contemplated program for power and reclamation dams on the river and its tributaries, and emphasized the fact that present dam facilities can supply far more power than is being used or will be required for many years. We also pointed out that there is still room for additional power units at present dams. We continue to discuss the reclamation and flood control "benefits" and to sum up the industry attitude.)

As for reclamation, Grand Coulee was designed to reclaim and irrigate thousands of acres. These acres are still dry and unproductive. Prior to the war this country was producing such an excess of agricultural products that subsidies and price peggings were necessary to protect the farmers. What reason is there to expect that after the war any economical use can be found for the millions of new acres that these projected dams might prepare for production. There are claims that this land should be ready for returned soldiers. After the last war less than one out of 50 of the returned soldiers who attempted to make a livelihood on farms were successful in establishing a going enterprise.

Flood control is not, and has not, been necessary on the Columbia. On the Willamette there is still a grave question as to whether or not the refreshments of the soil from silt deposited by floods has not offset the occasional losses, and even granting the need for flood control on the Willamette the report of the U.S. Army Engineers indicate that this goal can be obtained by a system of revetments at *half the cost* of the projected high dam program.

The Willamette system is the last source for the supply of spring salmon eggs from which stock can be obtained to attempt to reseed depleted waters. Backing this project are the powerful timber interests who want a cheap highway upon which to float their logs to the mills for the comparatively short period remaining before the timber stands are exhausted.

The commercial fishing industry does not intend to stand in the path of necessary development of the Columbia Basin area.

It does, however, take the stand that its economic importance fully justifies it in opposing further dam construction in areas which will definitely imperil the salmon runs, until such time as present potentials of established structures for the production of power and of reclamation projects are exhausted, and a clear and definite need for further expansion of these factors in the Pacific Northwest can be evidenced. The industry does object to being doomed to extinction to supply a few temporary construction payrolls to erect dams from which only conjectural advantages can be obtained.

FISH AUDITOR

Emil Streichert

Thirty-three years with CRPA and responsible for the voluminous and complex records dealing with fish receipts and payments to fishermen. Before that 14 years on the seven seas. Holds master's certificate in both sail and steam. Has had many trips around Cape Horn in sail.

When Streichert first joined CRPA staff, office was heated with wood stove that burned wooden can cases. The next improvement was a steam boiler that was located under the dock. Exceptional tides would cover the firebox and leave the office workers shivering.

THE BUMBLE BEE

Published periodically by the Columbia River Packers Association, Inc., Astoria, Oregon, for employees and fishermen.

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Office.....Louise Carlson
Elmore Tuna.....Marjorie Christensen
Elmore Salmon.....P. J. Burke, Sr.
Cold Storage.....Jo Schwab
Shipyards.....Lura Skyles
Boatyard and Launches.....Johan Peterson
Scandinavian.....John North
Geo. & Barker.....Peter Welch
Occident.....Albert Paldanius
Alaska Office.....Herman Geissel
Machine Shop.....Tom Wooton

STATION REPORTERS

Reedsport.....Melvin Jensen
Cushman.....George Ready
Waldport.....Jack Marincovich
Newport.....Velda Uffelman
Depoe Bay.....Lois Edwards
Wheeler.....George Radich
Eagle Cliff.....George Johnson
Ellsworth.....Bernice Loomis
St. Helens.....Oscar Gerard
Clifton.....Jalmar Thompson
Altoona.....Laura Hendrickson
North Shore.....Frank Pfleger
Ilwaco.....Wayne Suomela
Westport, Wn......Gene Matthews
Bay Center.....Carl Rozine

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER...Ned Thorndike

RECORD PACK CANNED AT CRPA'S NAKNEK

CRPA Cannery on Bristol Bay packs over 140,000 cases

CRPA's Alaska venture has ended for 1945. Superintendent Ralph Hendrickson, returned the middle of August after putting up a record pack of 143,000 cases at Naknek Cannery, of which 135,000 cases were Reds. The big pack was the product of only 22 days actual fishing time between June 25 and July 25. Fishing, according to Hendrickson was steady throughout the entire period but with few high peaks. The best fishing days were in the vicinity of July 7 to 10. A total of 1,716,000 fish went to make up the pack, which in accordance with the government regulations calling for combined operations in the Alaska waters during 1945, will be divided between CRPA, Libby, McNeill, & Libby, Nakat Packing Co., and the Intercoastal Packing Co. In addition CRPA will have a share in the pack of Libby, McNeill, & Libby, at that company's cannery at Ekuk, also on Bristol Bay, where approximately 87,000 cases were canned.

Between 400 to 450 persons were employed at Naknek during the season. Of this number 80 per cent were Alaska residents, and many of them native Eskimos who were used in cannery work. These Eskimos were collected in the North, assembled at Bethel and flown 230 miles to Naknek by airplane. Weather was good during the entire season and no major accidents occured to mar the operation.

Eighty Boats Used

Eighty gillnet boats and 10 set nets provided the fish. The large pack was surprising in that Federal forecasts indicated very light runs in the Bristol Bay area for the season. Labor while scarce was secured in sufficient quantity to handle the necessary work. The pack was loaded early in August and shipped by Alaska Steamship Co. to Bellingham, Wn., for storage.

The 1945 pack was 7,000 cases above the prior high year at Naknek in 1943 when 136,000 cases were canned and far above the 1944 pack when the total was 85,000 cases.

Nushagak Repairs

Superintendent John Head of CRPA's Nushagak cannery arrived home after spending three and a half months directing general repairs and renovation of the cannery plant. This cannery has not been operated since 1940 and had suffered considerable damage from wind, weather and tides. Head, with a crew of two machinists, two carpenters, and a cook, raised, repaired and tested the boilers; shipped out the Iron Chinks for repair and remodeling, and repaired walls, roofs, foundations and other damaged portions of the building. He reports that material for completion of the balance of the reconditioning work is now on the ground and that the plant can easily be put into shape for the contemplated 1946 operations.

ALASKA INTERLUDE

(*Photo by Marjory Collins*)

CRPA's Naknek Alaska Cannery crew enjoying a little relaxation to music by Filipino Orchestra.

GREEN STURGEON

Seven feet of fish with Albert Paldanius, Occident Station Manager, carrying the measuring stick

FISH AND BIOLOGIST

Floyd Bryant

Aquatic Biologist with the Federal Fish & Wild Life service, Mr. Bryant has spent five years on the Columbia River. His summers are devoted to checking marked fish and preparing weight tables. During the rest of the year he engages in stream survey work. The marked fish check includes those marked by the state fisheries departments as well as by federal hatcheries. He is being assisted this year by E. D. Towler, Principal of Astoria High School. In the picture above Mr. Bryant is shown holding a fine 55 pound Chinook salmon.

WEATHER HITS ALBACORE PRODUCTION

Big fleet waits quiet seas to improve catches

With the biggest fleet of boats ever assembled in the Pacific Northwest available for the 1945 tuna season production has been disappointing to date. Weather that favored the fishermen continually during 1944, has been spotty and the fleet has been unable to fish consistently.

With the big bait boats now equipped and ready to chum it is hoped that a good spell of weather during the next 30 days will permit the increased fleet to bring production up to the 1944 figures.

CRPA's canned pack to date this year closely approximates that of 1944 but storage holdings are far behind.

Altoona Project OK

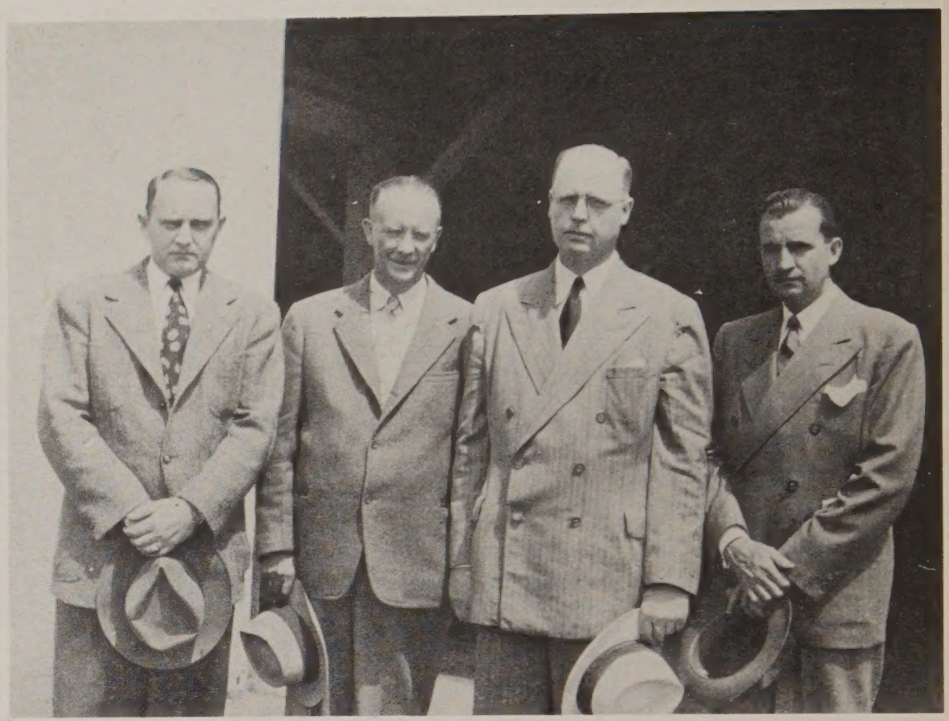
The new tuna venture at Altoona, initiated this year has been working very satisfactorily in view of the fact that the available labor supply was untrained in packing this fish. Starting with five tons per day, production had been moved up to 10 tons per day by the fourth week of the month, and the man hour production charts were showing favorable curves. It is possible that production at this plant may be shifted to salmon for the last week of the August fishing season and possibly for the first ten days of the fall season which opens on September 10.

Wage Contract Discussed

Union contract plans were advanced during the month. At a meeting held August 20 with the CRFPU negotiating committee a number of matters were discussed which will operate outside the proposed incentive wage plan. A final report will be made to the union committee prior to September 5, and another joint meeting held on September 6.

With the incentive pay plan now in the hands of the individual firms for the purpose of setting standards of work, CRPA can report considerable progress made by Superintendent Jay Hendrickson and the union plant production committee. Comparative studies have been made of the relation of the various departmental jobs in relation with each other and it is hoped that definite standards can be set in the near future. When the plan is completed it will be submitted to the plant employees for consideration.

CONGRESSMAN VISITS



Oregon Congressman Harris Ellsworth, (third from left) visits CRPA plants at Astoria to get a first hand idea of the magnitude of the state's commercial fishery. Following his visit he expressed the opinion that it is well worth the co-operation and support of Oregon's congressional delegation. Others in the picture are (from the left) Edward W. Thompson, CRPA President; Merle R. Chessman, State Senator, and Editor of the *Astorian-Budget;* and Thomas F. Sandoz, CRPA Executive Vice-President.

HAPPY FISHERMAN

(Right) Willie Poikkila, Occident Station gillnet fisherman for CRPA who has high boat honors for the season to date. Willie and his brother Aino (left) brought in 4700 pounds of Columbia River salmon August 20, and then came back with almost two tons on August 21. In making their record haul the Poikkila brothers took almost a ton of fish in their last drift. They couldn't take the time to disentangle the salmon from the web and just piled the mass of web and fish in the boat and headed for their station. Eight thousand pounds of salmon at 13½ cents a pound isn't exactly hay for two nights' work and it is no wonder the brothers look pleased.

BAIT TANKS AID IN TUNA PRODUCTION

CRPA Patents Burrus Design for water flow

One of the most important factors in the large Northwest albacore tuna production in 1944 was the increased loads brought in by boats equipped for bait fishing. Tuna bait consists of anchovies and sardines from five to eight inches in length and these small fish must be alive. They are held on the tuna boats in large tanks. From these tanks they are scooped in dip nets into the water along the boats to attract the tuna schools to the sides of the craft. Once they are brought alongside, they are easily caught. Excited by the presence of the live bait they strike voraciously at the hooks. Sometimes the hooks are baited with the anchovies or sardines, and again just the usual feather lures are used.

There are two principal problems in tuna bait fishing. One is the taking of the bait itself which has to be seined in very small mesh nets, along the shallow coastal waters. The other and the chief problem is to keep the bait alive in tanks until it is ready to be used.

CRPA Patent

CRPA has designed a special type of bait tank with two patented features that are solving this problem. One of the great difficulties in keeping bait alive is the fact that if bubbles enter the tank the bait will die. To overcome this difficulty CRPA bait tanks incorporate a patented expansion chamber with baffle plates which tend to eliminate this difficulty. Another patented feature, designed to meet the same problem is the special screen arrangement. This permits the entrance of the water at the bottom of the tank in a flow that crosses the bottom, moves upward and again across the top.

Walter Burrus, Inventor

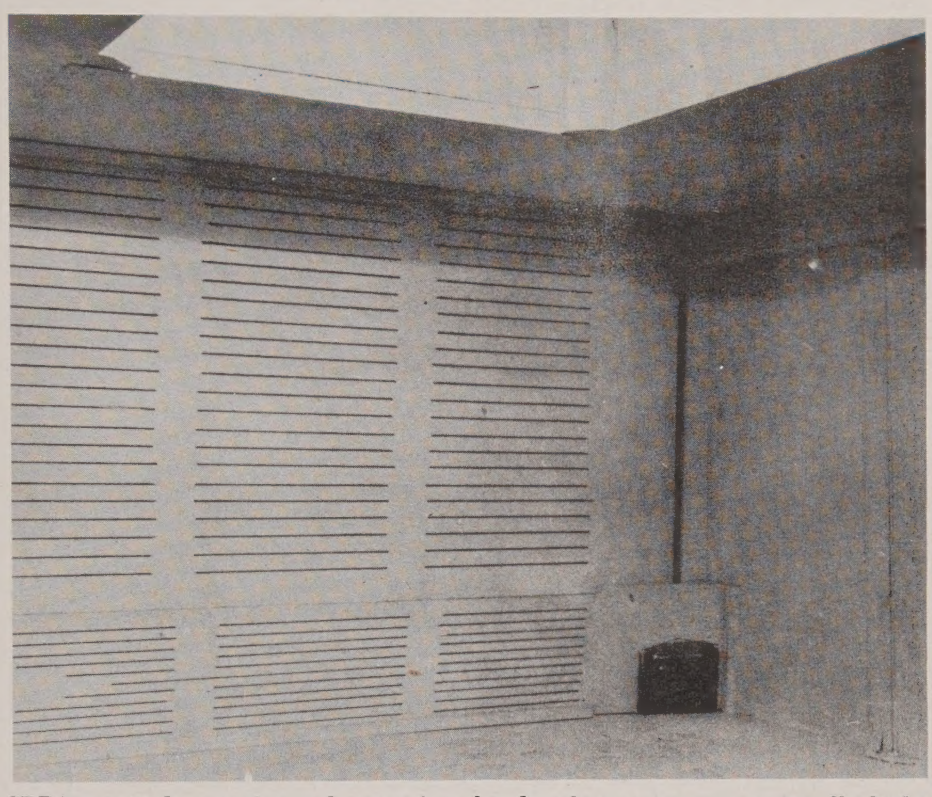
These features are the invention of Walter Burrus, of Astoria, who has had long experience in both Northwest and California tuna boat operation. The CRPA has purchased the patent rights to these designs from Mr. Burrus, who was formerly port engineer, for this company, and who is now engaged in fishing ventures of his own. Experience to date with the tanks so equipped indicate that these designs function very well, and that the installations are a great improvement over former tank arrangements.

Some metal tanks are used but the bulk are built of waterproofed plywood. They differ in size according to the size of the boats upon which they are to be installed but the average tank holds about 2500 to 2800 gallons of water and will hold around 700 pounds of bait. The size of the largest tanks is about 10 by 10 by 4. Water must be completely changed every nine minutes. Hull design of some boats causes an air space near the tank water intake, and in some cases special pads are used to eliminate drawing in of air bubbles from the bottom of the boat.

Tank Size Important

One of the difficulties encountered in bait tank installation is the care that must be used not to "over tank" the boat and render it unseaworthy. The proper weight determination must be carefully made as the tanks sit high on the boat and well aft. This load of tons of water must be carefully adjusted in relation to the design of each boat as well as its size. In some cases CRPA has had to refuse to install tanks obviously too large for a proper safety factor.

BAIT TANK INTERIOR



CRPA patented screening and expansion chamber features seen on rear wall. Outlet gate at lower rear right.

Fabricated bait tanks at CRPA shipyard waiting arrival of tuna fleet.

COVER PAGE

Our cover page this month shows CRPA's cold storage plant at Astoria, Oregon. In 1944, 14,000,000 pounds of fish were moved through this plant and into the market. In addition, 5,000,000 pounds of Albacore Tuna were stored there prior to canning. The plant has 500 feet of waterfront; can manufacture 90 tons of ice per day, and has storage space for 2,000 tons of frozen sea-food.

Salmon Catches pick up toward month end; Pack is behind 1944

Salmon production was picking up rapidly as the month closed but the pack to date was still considerably behind 1944 figures. Contributing causes have been the high water prevailing in the early spring months and the dearth of fishermen on the river. Runs that have entered have been spotty and many of the regular fishermen preferred to stay with their steady war work jobs rather than risk the gamble of any fishing venture.

The June, July and early August runs were behind those of last year. As the month closed big catches were being made in the lower river and production for CRPA was upping to around 50 to 90 tons per day. The August runs were apparently late and there were indications that the opening of the fall season September 10, might see at least a near repetition of the same cycle catches in 1941 when 25 year records were broken.

It was fortunate that the efforts of the packers and fishermen had obtained an opening of part of the area at the mouth of the river formerly closed to commercial fishing because of mine fields. Practically all the large catches up to press time have been made in this area. Gillnetting in the middle and up-river have brought no returns of any amount, although seine catches picked up steadily about the middle of the month.

Escapement Good

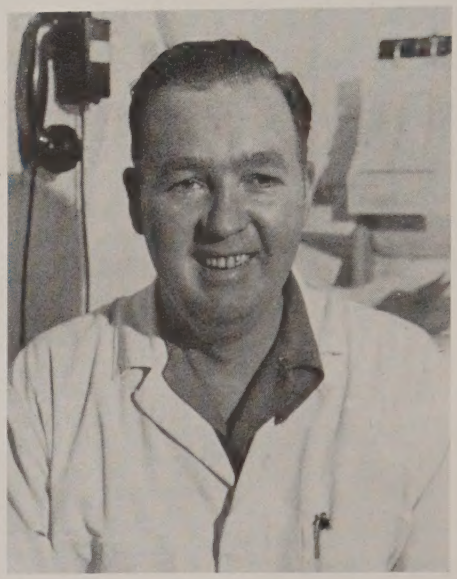
Salmon escapement at Bonneville dam during the year to date has considerably exceeded that of 1944, although the commercial catch has been less. The same factors which were cited above as affecting the commercial catch have aided in bringing about an increased escapement.

Few Trawl Fish

Trawl fish production dropped to a minimum during the months as practically all the trawlers in the area converted for tuna fishing. Crab production has ceased for the summer and fall. The shad roe pack shows a distinct increase over that of 1944.

Ocean troll salmon fishing showed a decided pick up during the months with some good trips delivered at Newport, DePoe Bay and Ilwaco.

SALMON RECEIVER



Art Niemi

Niemi is one of the salmon receivers at Elmore Cannery and in addition is in charge of the lead house where weights for fish nets are manufactured.

Visitors from Texas

Chester E. Hardy, of Chester E. Hardy Co., Houston, Texas, broker, with his son and their families were visitors in Astoria during the month. They inspected CRPA plants and facilities, before continuing their trip to other Northwest points.

THERE IS ALWAYS A BETTER WAY

(In each issue of the Bumble Bee hereafter there will be a list of suggestion awards. All awards granted to date will be published as soon as space permits.)

Celeste E. Peterson, $5.00. Cot in ladies' rest room at Cold Storage.

Bertha Johanson, $5.00. Installation of heat in Supply Room at Cold Storage.

Millie J. Sagen, $5.00. Construction of bus stations on each side of the highway at Elmore Cannery.

Mrs. Svea N. Milde, $5.00. Placing of small box for time cards in a convenient location in the ladies' rest room.

John M. Jewett, $5.00. Placing of small bench vise on bench in the label room.

Wm. Niemi, $10.00. Revision in system in Machine Shop for issuing job numbers on work being done.

W. C. Palmberg, $10.00. Perpendicular divider for use in packing 12-oz. and 5-lb. tins of Crabmeat.

Mrs. Svea N. Milde, $5.00. Installation of floor drains in washroom and one close to phone booth.

Mrs. Patricia Foster, $5.00. Umbrella rack for the Main Office.

Chris Thompson, $5.00. Building of a rack for lids which go on fresh fish boxes.

Mrs. Burdette Yexley, $5.00. Open cart for use in picking up books off desks to go into the vault.

Mrs. Lydia Andrich, $5.00. Garbage disposal in the coffee room.

Mrs. Ida Piippo, $5.00. Change of location of lavatories in Salmon Cannery.

PRIME MOVERS

Fish products must be moved fast and carefully handled. Here are the men who operate CRPA'S big fish trucks. (Left to right) Brunmier, Truck Superintendent Hartman Johnson, Malinen, Fry, Simonsen. (Kneeling) Shorthill.

CRPA Ship busy with bait tanks for tuna fleet

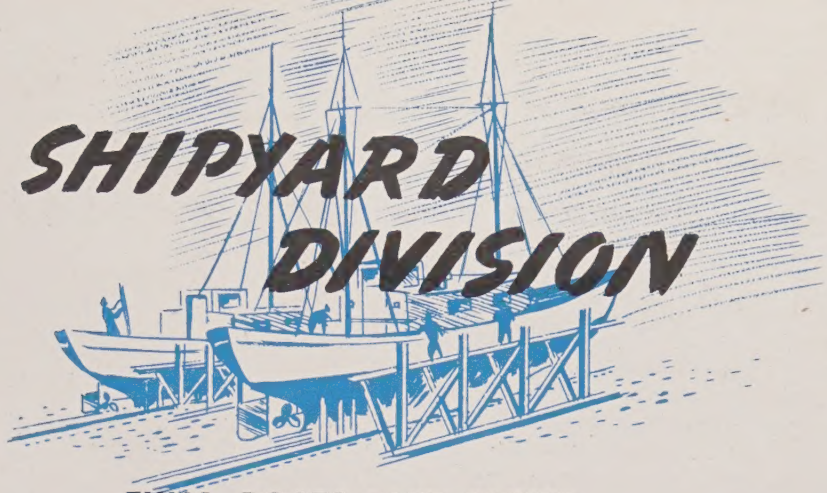
CRPA Ship division had a busy month with practically all the yard's facilities devoted to the job of putting bait tanks on the tuna fleet units. The installation of these tanks often involved additional work through the hulls. Time for the job varied according to the number of tanks carried and the size and lines of the craft.

Forty-one tanks were installed in August up to the 18th and 26 of these were two tank jobs. As the *Bumble Bee* went to press on that date 26 tanks remained to be installed out of the more than a 100 built earlier in the season. Three of these were being sent to Newport for installation on boats at the CRPA plant there. With the peak of installation work passed plant officials are beginning to relax a bit. During the earlier part of the month the work was proceeding at a dizzy rate and the yard motto was "keep moving or get knocked off the dock," in the rush of fishermen and workers, all hurrying to get ready for action amid the tuna schools.

Twenty-three boats were put on the ways for major and minor repairs during the period. Painters were busily engaged in the new trawlers, the Kiska and Swiftwater, which are nearing completion.

NEW TUNA BOAT

"Sea King," of San Pedro, Skipper Andrew I. Larson, of CRPA Ship ways for rudder repairs.



TUNA BOATS TAKE TANKS

A few of the boats of CRPA's big tuna fleet assembled at CRPA Shipyard for the installation of bait tanks. Tanks installation is visible on stern of boat in left foreground. The average time for tank and pump installation, where no other work has been involved has been about seven days. The rooflike structure over the tanks protects the "chummer" from flying hooks of the fishermen.

SHIPS LOG

Mrs. Irene Rider is a new addition to our office during the bait tank rush.

And on August 14th a Victory son, Robert, weight seven pounds and ½ ounce, for Sw. and Mrs. Harold Hovden.

For Sw. and Mrs. Harry Larson, a fine son, Donald Paul, weight seven pounds and 12½ ounces. He arrived on August first.

Market Letter

1945 Salmon Pack reservation cut by new directive

The canned salmon industry in the course of its dealings with the various governmental agencies appointed a contract committee to represent the industry. This committee has worked with the governmental agencies in handling problems of export case requirements and pack figures so as to arrive at percentages required by the Government under their set-aside orders. The committee has also handled many details incidental to the Government's canned salmon purchase program.

Since the end of the war in Europe, the industry's contract committee has made a determined effort to secure a reduction of Government set-aside orders on canned salmon. Their efforts met with some success last week when Secretary of Agriculture Anderson announced a reduction in the set-aside order on Columbia River Chinook, Puget Sound Sockeyes, and Alaska Pinks and Chums from 80 per cent to 60 per cent. The set-aside order of 80 per cent remains in effect on all other species of salmon.

Since V-J Day industry's contract committee has been most active in its endeavor to secure further reductions in the set-aside order on canned salmon, and it is to be hoped the committee's request will be recognized.

CRPA has had a splendid record of performance during the war years. Now that the war is over we are interested in seeing that every surplus case of canned salmon be made available to the domestic trade at once. We have made a fair allocation of our pack to our civilian trade during the war years, and as increased quantities become available due to changes in Government set-aside orders, we shall continue this practice of allocating the supply equitably among our established trade.

REFRIGERATION CHIEF

Louis Lund

"IT'S O. K." SAYS V. P.

A. P. McCullough, Vice-President of Paxton & Gallagher, Omaha, Nebraska, (lef.) inspects and approves of CRPA's 1945 tuna pack, with William Palmberg, CRPA's Assistant Sales Manager (center) and Fred Sandoz, Sales Manager, looking on. Mr. McCullough spent two days inspecting CRPA's extensive plant facilities at Astoria, Ore.

CAFETERIA DELAYED

Progress on CRPA's Elmore cafeteria has been held up by delays in receipt of necessary materials. Such equipment as has been received has been installed and the necessary preliminary work with government agencies completed so that the dining place can be opened as soon as the equipment is received. Superintendent Jay Hendrickson now places the opening date as "not later than September 10."

BOND SALE BIG

We just missed getting the results of the last War Bond drive in the July issue of the *Bumble Bee*, but the results were so excellent that we must note them even at this late date. Bond sales for the Astoria area, and with employment far from its peak totaled $24,417 and hit an average of almost $225 per employee. There were no big individual sales to build up a phony average. We expect that the Victory Bond sales will meet with a similar reception.

ICING FISH REEFER

Ice and salt packed in refrigerator car at CRPA Cold Storage to protect sea food shipment.